



York County's Head Start Program Children Place Above National Average In First Year of National Reporting System Assessments

Yorktown, Feb. 24 - During the 2003-2004 school year, York County's Head Start program joined similar programs across the country in implementing the Head Start National Reporting System (NRS).

The NRS is part of President Bush's "No Child Left Behind Act." The NRS is a standardized assessment that is administered to all Head Start children who will transition to kindergarten the next year. The NRS measures children's progress in understanding spoken English, vocabulary, letter recognition, and early math skills. Head Start programs use the information from the NRS reports to improve quality, determine staff training needs, and monitor progress of groups of children. No individual child reports are made. Results from the NRS will eventually be used to monitor programs and could impact funding.

Children enrolled in York County's Head Start during the 2003-2004 program year made considerable progress during their year of assessment. York County's children scored as well as, or better than, the average score nationally, as well as in Region III (Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia, and District of Columbia), and the state of Virginia.

For example, 55 percent of the York County children ended the year at or above age level in the vocabulary section of the NRS while the national average was only about 33 percent. Only 9 percent of York County's children ended the year one or more years behind their age level in vocabulary, whereas the national average was almost 40 percent. Sixty-three percent of York County Head Start children were able to identify 17 or more letters of the alphabet with the national average at 45 percent.

In early math skills, York County Head Start children made exceptional progress. At the beginning of the year, only 22 percent of the children were able to count 15 or more

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York County “Head Start” Students Perform Well

objects; by year’s end, that number had increased to 66 percent. These were slightly above the national averages 20 percent and 60 percent, respectively, for math skills.

For more information on York County Head Start, call Belinda H. Willis at (757) 890-3888.

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